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06/19/2003

Darko Segota

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9031

21999 7590 02/01/2010

KIRTON AND MCCONKIE  
60 EAST SOUTH TEMPLE,  
SUITE 1800  
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84111

EXAMINER

LEE, BENJAMIN P

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

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MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/01/2010

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/600,206	<b>Applicant(s)</b> SEGOTA ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> BENJAMIN P. LEE	<b>Art Unit</b> 3641	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 October 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10, 12, 13 and 15-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6 and 20-24 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-10, 12, 13 and 15-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |                                                                                     |                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                    | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)         | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____                                                         | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Response to Arguments*

1. Applicant's arguments filed 10/28/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. On page 9 of the response, Applicant argues that both independent claims (1 and 18) require that..."the height of a drop face varies along the length of a given drop face and wherein the drop face comprises length of a blended segment which is structured to provide a smooth and gradual transition **between variable height drop faces** along the length of a given drop face". Examiner respectfully asserts that Applicant's claims do not require "**between variable height drop faces**", but rather, "between the variable heights along the length of a given drop face". Examiner asserts that the prior art shows a "drop face" which varies in height along the length of the face. Applicant additionally argues at the last paragraph of page 9 that the prior art does not show a "smooth and gradual" transition between variable height drop faces along the length of a given drop face, but rather angular drops that are at least as large a drop as the drop face itself (shown in figures 7-9 of Falco). Applicant further argues that none of the prior art discloses a "blended segment structure to provide a smooth and gradual transition between variable height drop faces along the length of a given drop face". Again, Examiner asserts that the claimed subject matter does not require "between variable height drop faces", but rather "between the variable heights along the length of a given drop face". Examiner respectfully asserts that the terms "smooth" and "gradual" are relative terms and the prior art demonstrates, to the degree claimed, variations in

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the heights of the "drop face" that constitute smooth and gradual to the degree specified by Applicant.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
  2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
  3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
  4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
2. Claims 1-5, 7,8, 13, 15, 16, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wells et al. (U.S. Patent 5505409) in view of Falco et al. (U.S. Patent 5133519) and in further view of Fronek et al. (U.S. Patent 5848769).
3. In regards to claims 1 and 18, Wells et al disclose a fuselage comprising the following:
- a. a frontal fuselage portion that leads through a fluid (col. 3, lines 55-59).

Note that Wells et al disclose a “frontal portion of the fuselage” which inherently “leads through a fluid (air);

- b. an outer fuselage surface relating with said frontal fuselage portion that receives fluid flow thereon (see Wells et al fig. 3 following);
- c. at least one fluid flow regulator featured and operable with said outer fuselage surface and extending at least a partial distance around said fuselage (items 20 of Wells et al fig. 3 following and col. 4, lines 63-67);
- d. fluid flow regulator comprising a leading surface and a trailing surface (see Wells et al fig. 3 following);
- e. a pressure recovery drop extending a pre-determined distance between said leading and trailing edges/surfaces to form a down step, said pressure recovery drop comprising at least one drop face of a calculated distance (col. 3, lines 30-35), said fluid flow regulator functioning to regulate existing pressure gradients along said fuselage/surface subject to external flow of fluid to optimize and equalize said fluid flow and to reduce the separation potential of said fluid (see Wells et al fig. 3 and col. 3, lines 30-54);
- f. a sub-atmospheric barrier generated at the base of said drop face as said fluid encounters and flows over said pressure recovery drop, said sub-atmospheric barrier comprising a low pressure area of fluid molecules having decreased kinetic energy that serve as a cushion between said higher kinetic energy fluid molecules in said fluid and the

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molecules at said outer fuselage surface to facilitate laminar flow and assist in the reduction of the separation potential of said fluid (col. 3, lines 40-45). Note that the “step” disclosed by Wells et al creates a “low pressure area” and thus helps to reduce the separation potential of the fluid;

- g. a trailing edge that defines and extends from the base of said pressure recovery drop that provides a trailing flow boundary for said fluid (see Wells et al fig. 3 following). Note that the “trailing surface” extends from the “pressure recovery drop” and inherently provides a trailing flow “boundary” for the fluid;

Wells et al fail to explicitly disclose that the pressure recovery drop is orthogonal. However, Falco et al disclose a drag reducing device incorporating orthogonal pressure recovery drops (see Falco et al fig. 1 following). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant’s invention to incorporate orthogonal pressure recovery drops as disclosed by Falco et al, since orthogonal drops induce the greatest flow separation.

Further, Wells et al fail to teach that the height of a drop face varies along the length of a given drop face and that the drop face further comprises a length of a blended segment structured to provide a smooth and gradual transition between the variable heights along the length of a given drop face. However, Falco et al teach a drop face that varies in height along its length and a “segment” of the drop face of Falco incorporates a “blended” transitioning between the variable heights along the length of

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the drop face (see Falco figures 7-9 following). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to incorporate a drop face which varies in height along its length as taught by Falco with the apparatus of Wells as modified to enhance mixing after the flow separation. Further, note that the variations in height from a peak to a valley along the drop face of Falco as illustrated in figures 7-9 constitute a "smooth and gradual" transition.

Wells et al as modified fail to disclose that the fluid flow regulator is capable of being repositioned in any direction about a surface. However, Fronek et al disclose a removable "fluid flow regulator" (drag reduction article) that is inherently capable of being repositioned in any direction on a surface (col. 1, lines 10-35 and col. 5, lines 52-62). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to make the fluid flow regulator "removable" as disclosed by Fronek et al, so that the fluid flow regulator can be replaced after damage.

Wells et al as modified also fail to disclose that the fluid flow regulator is removably attachable. However, Fronek et al disclose an "an article applied to surfaces to reduce the drag caused by fluids flowing across the surface" that is capable of being removeably attached to that surface (col. 1, lines 21-25) and positioned in "any" direction relative to airflow desired. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention to incorporate the ability to remove and reapply the modified Wells et al apparatus as taught by Fronek et al, so that the "fluid flow regulator" can be more easily subjected to routine maintenance or be replaced.

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2. In regards to claim 2, Wells et al as modified disclose a pressure recovery drop is positioned at or proximate an optimal pressure recovery point defined as the location(s) about said surface at which there is an imbalanced or unequal pressure gradient forward and aft of said fluid, thus creating an adverse pressure about said fuselage, which adverse pressure gradient induces friction and pressure drag that ultimately increases the separation potential of said fluid (col. 28-35). Note that Wells et al disclose positioning the “steps” at a point where the nose meets the fuselage and/or along the length of the fuselage.

3. In regards to claim 3, Wells et al as modified disclose that the pressure recovery drop is oriented substantially perpendicular to the direction of flow of said fluid (see Wells et al fig. 3 following).

4. In regards to claim 4, Wells et al as modified disclose that the pressure recovery drop comprises a linear formation (see Wells et al fig. 3 following).

5. In regards to claim 5, Wells et al as modified disclose that the fluid flow regulator extends annularly around said fuselage (col. 4, lines 63-67).

6. In regards to claim 7, Wells et al as modified disclose that the pressure recovery drop extends about only a portion of said outer fuselage surface (col. 3, lines 55-59).



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Note that Wells et al disclose that the “steps” extend longitudinally along the “forward portion” (only a portion) of the fuselage.

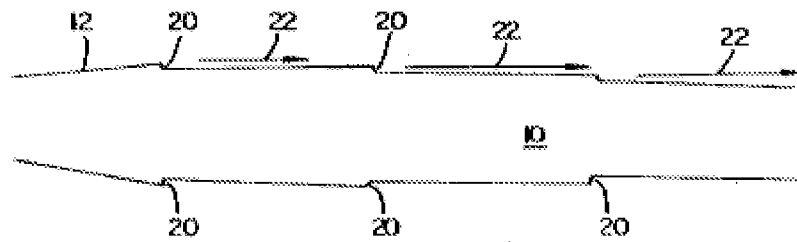
7. In regards to claim 8, Wells et al as modified disclose that the outer fuselage surface features a plurality of fluid flow regulators that function together to regulate, influence, and control fluid flow and its properties and characteristics across said outer fuselage surface (see Wells et al fig. 3 following and col. 3, lines 39-45 and 55-59).

8. In regards to claim 13, Wells et al as modified disclose that the fluid flow regulator is integrally formed with said outer fuselage surface (see Wells et al fig. 3 following).

9. In regards to claim 15, Wells et al as modified disclose that the pressure recovery drop comprises a plurality of drop faces to magnify the influence of fluid flow regulator on said fluid (see Wells et al fig. 3 following).

10. In regards to claim 16, Wells et al as modified disclose that the fuselage comprises a fuselage of an aircraft (col. 1, lines 5-12).

11. In regards to claim 19, Wells et al as modified disclose that the moving body comprises the fuselage of an airplane or other similar aircraft (col. 3, lines 55-59).



**Fig. 3**

Wells et al

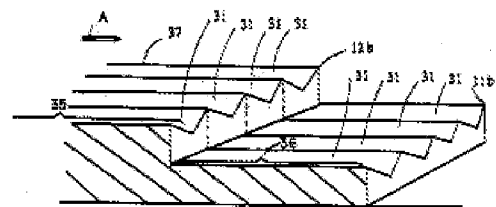


FIG. 7

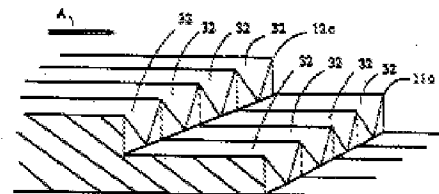


FIG. 8

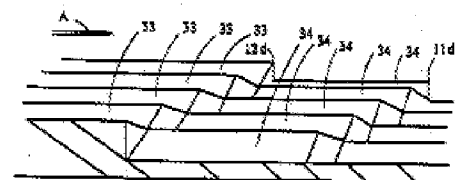


FIG. 9

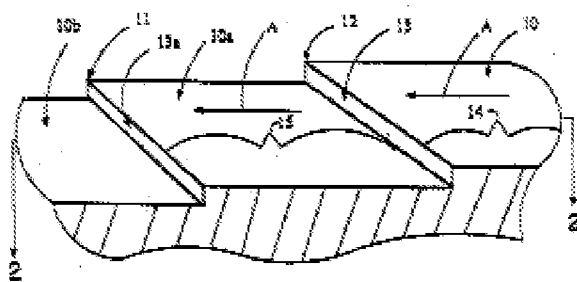


FIG. 1

Falco et al

Falco et al

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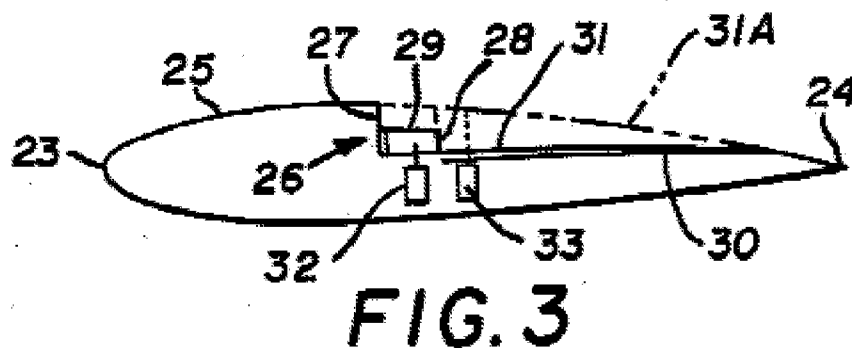
12. Claims 9, 10, 12 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wells et al. (U.S. Patent 5505409) and Falco et al. (U.S. Patent 5133519) and Fronek et al. (U.S. Patent 5848769) as applied to claims 1 and 18 above, and further in view of Smith et al. (U.S. Patent 4890803).

13. In regards to claims 9, 10 and 12, Wells et al as modified fail to disclose that the fluid flow regulator is a dynamic fluid flow regulator capable of adjusting, on demand, with varying design constraints, flow characteristics, environmental conditions, and operational situations pertaining to said fluid, said object, and any combination of these. However, Smith et al disclose a “fluid flow regulator” (item 26 of Smith et al fig. 3 following) that is “movable” to manipulate flow characteristics (col. 3, lines 42-46 and 57-65) and is inherently capable of “adjustment” to meet any of Applicant’s stated conditions or situations. Note that this is equivalent to Applicant’s adjustable “pressure recovery drop”. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant’s invention to incorporate a “movable” (adjustable) “fluid flow regulator” (pressure recovery drop) into/onto a fluid flow surface as disclosed by Smith et al, so that an operator can control the fluid flow dynamics and thus the lift generation of the fluid flow surface (body) is capable of manipulation according to the angle at which the fluid flow surface interfaces the direction of fluid flow (angle of attack). Note that based on the common definition of oscillate, “to move repeatedly from side to side or up and down between to points”, presented by the Cambridge Dictionary of American English ([www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org)), the “movable pressure recovery drop” as stated by

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Applicant in claim 10, is inherently capable of “repeated [movement] between two points” and therefore Applicant’s claim 12 is equivalent to claim 10.

14. In regards to claims 17, Wells et al as modified fail to explicitly disclose that the pressure recovery drop comprises an orthogonal design. However, Smith et al disclose a “drop” that is at a right angle to the fluid flow surface (see Smith et al fig. 3 following). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant’s invention to require that the “drop” is at a right angle to the flow surface as disclosed by Smith et al to achieve the most significant pressure drop.



Smith et al

### ***Summary/Conclusion***

15. Claims 1-5, 7-10, 12, 13 and 15-19 are rejected. Claims 20-24 are drawn to a non-elected invention as per response to Restriction/Election dated 12/13/2006.

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Benjamin P. Lee whose telephone number is 571-272-8968. The examiner can normally be reached between the hours of 8:30am and 5:00pm on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Carone can be reached on 571-272-6873. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For

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more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Benjamin P. Lee/

Examiner, Art Unit 3641